

**Board of County Commissioners  
Leon County, Florida**

Attachment # 4  
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Date: September 17, 2003  
To: Board of County Commissioners  
From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator  
Subject: Follow-up to District 4 Community Meeting of September 3, 2003

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**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation was provided by Mr. Richard Thoma, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairman Tony Grippa.

**Presentation**

- Chairman Grippa presented a Resolution to Phyllis Birschbach, in honor of Tom Birschbach for His Outstanding Contributions to the Killearn Lakes Community while Executive Director of the Killearn Lakes Homeowners Association. The Resolution declared September 3, 2003 as "*Tom Birschbach Day*."
- Chairman Grippa also presented to the Birschbach family, *Birschbach Way* road signs that illustrated the renaming of Whitehead Road in honor of Tom Birschbach.

**Status Reports**

1. Update on the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)
  - Assistant County Administrator, Vince Long, explained what a CRA is, how a new CRA is created, and presented the County's objection/argument to the City of Tallahassee's proposed Downtown CRA. Issues addressed in the presentation include:
    - Defined a CRA - a geographically defined area (designated as such under the Community Redevelopment Act), exhibiting pervasive slum and blighted areas. A CRA is established for the purposes of utilizing statutorily permitted economic development tools within the CRA.
    - Illustrated through slides, that the Downtown Tallahassee area does not exhibit pervasive slum and blighted areas but rather consists of highly valued property (law firms, lobbyists' offices, restaurants) and will continue to be a prosperous area
    - Charter counties, as Leon, must approve CRAs, as the County did with the Frenchtown CRA. The Board voted 7-0 against the proposed Downtown Tallahassee CRA.
    - Loophole allows City to **expand** a CRA (expanding the Frenchtown CRA), without County approval.
    - The County will lose \$80 million over the 20-year period in property tax revenue. The County will have to raise the County millage rate and/or reduce the level of County services - library services, parks and recreation, law enforcement, emergency medical services, etc.

- The Board announced that there will be a Joint City/County CRA meeting on Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in City Commission Chambers. The Board urged citizens to contact the City Commission and ask for an immediate halt to the approval of a Downtown CRA.
- There were no speakers on this item.

2. Update on Emergency Medical Services

- Assistant County Administrator, Vince Long, gave a summary of the County's decision to implement a County-run EMS department, that will be activated on January 1, 2004. Mr. Long focused on the positives of the County-run that includes:
  - a continued commitment to provide the highest level of service
  - increased emphasis on training of EMS professionals
  - expanded Advanced Life Support training for first responders to the scene in rural areas (i. e. EMS personnel, City of Tallahassee firefighters) to optimize ability to provide life-saving medical treatment
  - increased emphasis on outreach to the community (training citizens to be "first responders")
  - a commitment to transfer/hire TMH's employees who have knowledge and experience regarding EMS
  - secured a contract with Air Methods Corporation to provide air ambulance emergency medical and transport services at no cost to the community; Air Methods "LifeNet" service will be stationed at Tallahassee airport.
  - source of funding is a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) of 0.5 mil for the first year of service, and a proposed reduction to 0.2 mil in future years.
- There were no speakers on this item.

3. Overview of the Fiscal Year 03/04 Operating and Capital Improvement Budget

- Alan Rosenzweig, Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), gave an overview of the FY 03/04 budget - the first budget prepared since Leon County became a Home Rule Charter County. There were handouts available to the public that provided an overview of property tax rates, tax savings and % of total budget assigned to each category of spending. For example, Public Safety, the largest category of spending, receives 32% of total budget. Highlights of the FY 03/04 Budget include:
  - The Fire Services MSTU and Water/Sewer Franchise Fee will be eliminated and replaced with the more equitable Public Services Tax (PST), which is charged to all users of public utilities.
  - The Communications Service Tax (CST) will provide an additional \$1 million/per year in revenue that will be used for the purchase of flooded property and flood mitigation.
  - The second year of the Senior Homestead Exemption provides \$414,000 in savings for seniors claiming the exemption (approx. 1,942).
  - Increased funding for library services.

- In efforts to reduce jail population, a Mental Health Coordinator position is added.
- Increased funding to support Mosquito Control's spraying.
- Funding to eliminate fee for County residents who participate in City recreation/sports programs
- Among like counties, Leon County ranks second highest in amount of exempt property, the lowest in operating budget, and second lowest in number of County employees per capita
- There were no speakers on this item.

• District 4 - Review of Killearn Lakes' Flooding Issues

- Chairman Grippa gave a brief overview of the flooding history and problems in Killearn Lakes and why it has become a public health/safety issue.
  - Discussed a recommendation of a two-step approach to the problems - 1) Commit \$5 million of the \$20 million in the Blueprint 2000 fund to replace septic tanks by installing/hooking up to City or Talquin sewer system. 2) Review Flooded Property Acquisition list and eligibility.
- Speakers: There were a large number of speakers (see attached list) who recited the flooding problems/issues with their property. Some speakers provided recommendations and/or information:
  - Wayne Thompson distributed photographs of the flooding/septic tank problem and stated that he expects the County to provide adequate services;
  - Lauren Pitts explained that she has been cited three times for septic tank failure and repairs will cost \$20,000. She explained the repairs will require a permit and a study.
    - Chairman Grippa and the Board directed staff to assist Ms. Pitts regarding the required study and the issuance of permits.

Staff: Growth & Environmental Management/Environmental Compliance - Gary Johnson/John Kraynak

- Mark Worley, a builder, stated that the homes in Killearn Lakes need to switch from septic tank to sewer. He also stated that there needs to be affordable housing in Leon County.
- David Meyer stated that in 1992 there was a change in the required size of a drain field and recommended that any work done needs to be reviewed by County.
- Mark Rapowski distributed material regarding alternative solution to going to sewer and explained how it worked.
- Rita Marsh-Birch stated that the best solution to the problem would be for Killearn Lakes to be annexed by the City.
- Richard Thoma explained that flooding problems have existed for 17 years - the problem goes away when rain stops and problems return when it rains. He stated that there is enough blame to go around and the developer controlled the development.

- Pam Keller requested a study be done so property owners can get immediate relief and suggested that there be a moratorium on building.
- Charles Townsend mentioned the cost to homeowners for sewer hookups - approximately \$3,000 - 4,000.
  - Chairman Grippa recommended that the Board ask the City or Talquin to waive the hookup fees.

Staff: Public Works/Engineering - Tony Park/Joe Brown

- Pam Hall expressed concerns regarding Land Development Regulations and suggested they be reviewed.
- Chairman Grippa proposed that \$5 million from Blueprint 2000 be used for conversion from septic tank to sewer in Units I and II and if money left over, put into other Killearn Lakes areas; stated that the Board is against mound septic tanks; believed that a moratorium is not a good idea; and proposed paying for existing problems by reconsidering and getting \$25 million back from Blueprint 2000.
- Commissioners expressed their support for finding solutions to the flooding/septic tank problems in Killearn Lakes.

Discussion Items by Commissioners

• Commissioners Winchester, Maloy and Sauls

- Thanked residents for attending the Community Meeting and stated that they had learned a great deal about the flooding problems

• Commissioner Grippa

- Stated that the \$1 million per year in revenue from the Communications Service Tax will be used for flooded property acquisitions of properties meeting the criteria.

• Commissioner Rackleff

- Proposed that the County establish a moratorium on building so that the County can come up with a plan to address the flooding/septic tank issues.

• Commissioner Proctor

- Requested a Resolution for U. S. Representative Maxine Waters declaring September 5, 2003 as "Maxine Waters Day"

Staff: Commissioner Aide - DeLane Adams

- **Commissioner Thael**

- Requested staff contact the City and/or Talquin immediately to see if they are interested in participating with County and homeowners in conducting a survey of Killearn Lakes homeowners to see how many interested in converting from septic tank to sewer.
  - Chairman Grippa stated that the survey was already being done.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

*The next regularly scheduled Board of County Commissioners meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2003.*

**Speakers on Flooding Issues in Killearn Lakes:**

Ms. Suren	Jackie Keough
Wayne Thompson	Michael Landy
Randy Miller	Mike Brossette
Lauren Pitts	Bill Heiman
Mark Worley	Bill Marvin
David Miner	Mike Reichert
Mark D. Rapasky	David Frazier
Zeke Bardhi	Pam Keller
Rita Marsh-Buch	Daniel Fleischman
Richard Thoma	Diane Sprauale
Steven Hilliard	James Gillis
Jerry Goode	Doug Clifford
Paul Harris	Charles Townsend
Craig Darling	Chris Pastula
Janet Weimar	Brad Trotman
Pamela Hall	